

Lost in Music: Understanding the Hermeneutic Overlap in Musical Composition, Performance and Improvisation

This paper will present a method of understanding the interpretive mechanism of creativity that occurs during composition, performance and improvisation.

In his seminal work 'Truth and Method', Hans Georg Gadamer wrote of being 'lost in play': the way towards understanding and interpretation was to recognise that we are only 'truly' capable of interpreting something if we are totally absorbed in it. A consideration of Gadamer's concept of play will provide the starting point for generating insights on how we think about doing something creative when we are actually doing it.

The paper will also revisit the problem of the hermeneutic circle, seek to unpack the relevance of Gadamer's analogy for contemporary approaches to composition, performance and improvisation which it will also be suggested constitutes composition and performance in real time.

Introduction- the nexus between composition and performance that exists in improvisation

The processes of composition and performance have mostly been considered to be separate pursuits by academe. Reasons for this include the nature of the debate over the differences between studying form and studying context. On one side, positivist musicological study and music theory that can be broadly considered as structuralist looks at parts and details. On the other, the sociological approaches of hermeneutics include discursive or socio-historical circumstances of the musical work. The result of this conceptual division creates obvious differences: composition may be structurally analysed in a scientific manner that overlooks social mechanisms and the aesthetic musical experience, and performance may be analysed as a social process involving people, that for others lacks 'scientific rigor'. There is debate over whether or not these positions can be reconciled.¹ However, there may be embedded historical, social and cultural factors in play that prevent such a prospect.

...there is a precedent for a sort of philosophical snobbery about musical expressions that are unorthodox and that are set apart from conventionally expected lines of development... Alperson (1984) wished to move improvisation from its status as a musical anomaly to its legitimate place as an authentic and meaningful musical form. (Valone, 1985: 193)

Whether a division between theory and practice is useful, and for whom and for what purpose has been rehearsed many times in critical sociology though perhaps not often enough in musicology.² In the social sciences it is argued that orthodox theories, including methods of knowledge and control generally maintain the *status quo* in circumscribing what practices are 'right' and others 'wrong'.

This means that the academic traditions of the musical conservatory are already pre-configured or conditioned by historical developments, methods and processes from which we cannot escape or distance ourselves. A broad example of this is the way music is analysed by music theorists using various rules of composition and methods of analysis, and by musicologists as a creative and social process within a social context using sociological and, or anthropological methods.³

What is hermeneutics?

Although there are a number of approaches to understand the processes of composition and performance that can be reduced to either forms of structuralist or hermeneutic research,⁴ the perspective taken here is underpinned by a form of hermeneutics that aims to be both inclusive and reflexive. The hermeneutic approach involves the processes of appropriation, interpretation and understanding of meaning. Originally used to interpret and explain biblical texts, its use expanded to literary history and poetry and has now broken free of being solely a text centric interpretative device. Its use has also extended to so-called 'text analogues' that constitute forms of action including performance and other creative acts.

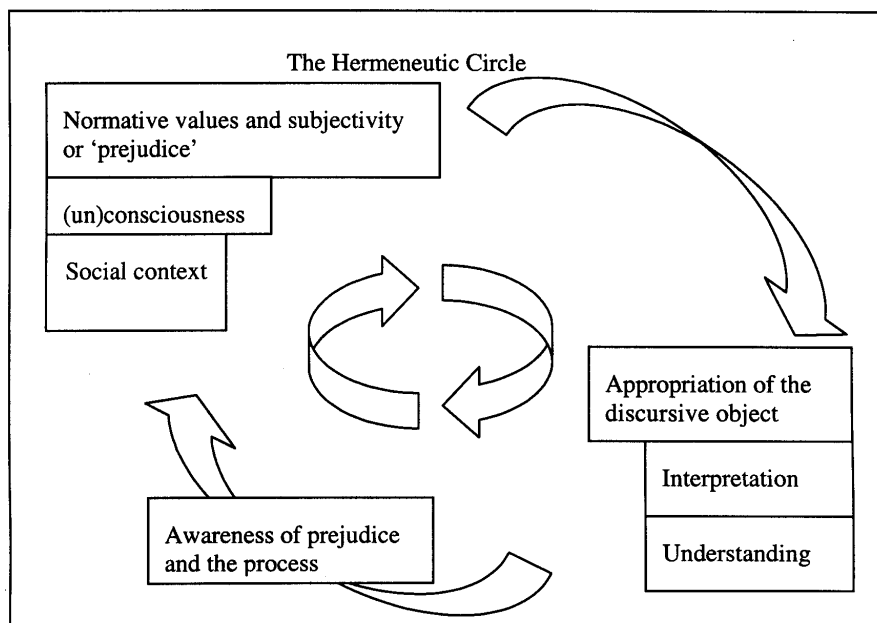
This is useful when considering the question of the differing approaches between theorists and musicologists as it can be used in a critical manner to look at the *purpose* of the approach as well as the *historical contingencies* in which it may operate. The purpose may include not only looking at rules of method but also the nature of the theoretical school or orthodoxy that operates as a guiding, conforming or overall controlling and validating influence or arbiter. The historical and contextual approach allows a consideration of the era in which the music is composed, performed, and improvised that extends to social and cultural artefacts about how, when, where, and why these things place and who was involved, and it aims to interpret and understand what the experience may have been like for those involved, both as musicians and members of an audience.

A critical hermeneutic approach is thus useful for understanding the musical processes because it allows a dialogic consideration⁵ of the objects of research mentioned above, though in some ways these may be contingent upon mainstream orthodox (structuralist) or heterodox (alternative or peripheral) conceptions of how forms of creativity operate. However, it also allows for the object to be discovered within an ontological landscape of historical and social contingency that permits a wider understanding by acknowledging the bias that methodological contingencies create within the process of appropriation, interpretation and understanding. This approach has a similarity with 'grounded theory' in sociology in that it is not a theory *per se* but allows a consideration to be built up by reflexive analysis. As such, this subsumes the role of method to dialogic and contextually situated examination.⁶ This represents a challenge to the nature and validity of epistemology in general, which brings to the fore questions about how we as subjects, think about the objects of research and how we may or may not make claims about the validity of knowledge generated by forms or mechanisms of understanding.

The hermeneutic circle and the fallacy of objectivity

The hermeneutic approach to interpretation and understanding is not without problems. The 'hermeneutic circle' (see Figure 1) is the problem that interpretation is mediated by human consciousness, and as such it is not possible to be objective about things that are variable, such as normative values, opinions and aesthetics. An example of this is how does one interpret and understand the intentions of an author or composer if we can never experience their thoughts? As we all perceive differently it may not be enough to simply decide based on ones opinion. Even the originators themselves may not conceive and understand their work in the same way at the same time, as everyone experiences when one finds a letter or diary from years past and reads it with new or different understanding.

Figure 1. The Hermeneutic Circle



If our opinions have a large degree of influence on how we interpret and understand knowledge and media, appropriation interpretation and understanding of meaning are therefore susceptible to various forms of social and historical construction.⁷ As can be seen from the Figure 1, it is possible to enter the ongoing hermeneutic process towards understanding at any point. However, interpretation and understanding are not static destinations but contextually specific: as context changes such as social environment, our conscious or unconscious perception and awareness and the system of rules or cultural mores to which we subscribe, our preferences and biases and appropriation of the discursive object (i.e. the ontological 'is' or entity of perception) are 'coloured'. We may only attempt to mitigate this colourisation by aiming to become continually and reflexively aware of these factors that operate within the hermeneutic circle with the aim of providing more accurate details and thus context etc that feed into the ongoing hermeneutic process. In other words one may never achieve total and 'pure uncoloured' understanding but by embracing the possibility of prejudice one can attempt to get closer than we otherwise would.

Notwithstanding the problem of the hermeneutic circle that arises when one seeks to understand subjective awareness, it can be argued that this acknowledgement of the subjective judgement of the researcher and subjectivity exercised by the subjects of research is a necessary condition to avoid laying claim to what can be called a 'general ahistorical theoretical framework' that can be applied in all situations. This is sociologically desirable because as all objective facts pass through human mediation and are tempered (or constructed) by social and historical specificity, there can be no monopoly of objectivity in pure form (though politicians may have us believe otherwise).

Gadamer's use of hermeneutics and the concept of play

Hans-Georg Gadamer's construction of hermeneutics involved an interesting approach towards achieving an 'uncoloured' understanding which involved an emphasis for the concept of 'play' in hermeneutics. For Gadamer, in "the experience of art" play could be described as something that did not refer to the conscious attitude of the creator or those who enjoy the work, but to the 'mode of being' of the art work itself. This mode of being can be explained as serving a 'medial' function that communicates the nature of play as a 'self-representing process' that does not require the activity of a player.

With reference to Huizinga (1939) Gadamer points out "the connection of children's and animal play with the 'sacred plays of the religious cult'... [that] in our idea of play the difference between faith and pretence is dissolved" (Gadamer 1981: 94). This leads Gadamer to assert the "primacy of play over the consciousness of the player:

It is part of the play that the movement is not only without goal or purpose but also without effort. It happens as it were, by itself. (Gadamer 1981: 94)

The connection for Gadamer between play and art was an obvious one as they are 'imitations' of the natural world. This also reinforced the insight that play is inherently medial, as it imitates and expresses the "infinite play of the world" (Gadamer 1981: 94). Gadamer also argued that an object could not be apprehended by an aesthetic consciousness, which had the result of elevating the importance of play in the interpretation process (Gadamer 1981: 91). The act of play itself is not a serious activity, and this is something that the player is aware of. However, at the same time this knowledge is somehow shielded, separated or subconsciously treated in such a way that the player actually intends a relation to the seriousness of the playing itself.

The player himself knows that play is only play and exists in a world which is determined by the seriousness of purposes. But he does not know this in such a way that, as a player, he actually intends this relation to seriousness. Play fulfils its purpose only if the player loses himself in his play. (Gadamer 1981: 91)

In other words, Gadamer is arguing that because we know that play is not serious, once one becomes immersed in the activity of play, and oblivious to external influences or the activities of others, its effect on us is that we are able to take the play itself seriously, almost a contradiction.

Indeed, it may be that it is only possible to lose oneself in play when we *know* that we can or are able to let ourselves become lost. This is why the analogy of children playing is important in understanding this concept. Children are able to play with a depth and sense 'abandonment' that is rarely possible in adulthood.

Of what relevance does Gadamer's analogy of 'play' have for contemporary approaches to composition, performance and improvisation? In many ways, Gadamer's insights seem quite obvious for the processes at work during composition, performance and improvisation. The 'thing' itself, the object of play is self-representing and almost happens by itself through the 'ideal' vehicle of being lost or immersed in the creative process of human mediation. As such, this acquires an importance or primacy over the creator as a medial object. This last statement can be understood by considering the way one experiences focus, compulsion and near obsession in the relationship one has with one's art when one is 'immersed in the process of creating it.' In this way, losing oneself in play has profound significance for those who create, or practice the arts.

Gadamer was influenced by Martin Heidegger's position on intentionality and work on the development of phenomenology, i.e. what we experience as perception, thought, imagination and communication etc. (Malpas 2005). Experiences are interpreted by the way they are configured or relate to the social and historical context in which they occur. A critical understanding of these aspects allows one to make intentional decisions about context that allows a 'stepping back' or meta-perspective permitting more considered analysis, perception and reflection.

Losing oneself as a means of separation

Another way to think about being lost in the Gadamerian sense is to consider the post-structuralist thought of Deleuze. Aspects of Deleuze's philosophical concept of 'radically horizontal' or 'rhizomic' thought could be seen to be analogous to Gadamer's 'being lost' but with an awareness of being so. According to Lechte, radically horizontal thought:

...operates largely according to its own norms and concepts ... and for [Deleuze] a philosopher who thinks (i.e. one who creates an event in thought), separates him or herself from the history of philosophy. (Lechte 1994: 102)

In this way we could for example be aware of the possibilities of influence from external knowledge or information but in the 'being lost' somehow subconsciously choose not to let these interfere with the thought processes of creative endeavour or play. Lechte's summary of Deleuze's contribution to post-structuralist thought provides another useful comment that alludes to the reflexive 'to and fro' and self-representing aspect of play that was also discussed by Gadamer in 'Truth and Method' (1981).

...in Deleuze's work inspired by Nietzsche, the 'tree' (search for origins) of the subject-object' relation is compared to the 'rhizome' of horizontal thought, thought always in movement. (Lechte 1994: 95)

The application of a hermeneutic approach

To apply the above approaches to creating music one may consider that creative reflection during composition can involve a consideration of time and space, proximity and degrees of specificity. In other words, one is able to allow one's stream of consciousness to flow in and out of focus in relation to both the particular and the non-specified idea or motif that is the current object of contemplation. With music this can be expressed in the way idiom or motif may develop over time, for example into instances of elision throughout a composition, a style of performance or improvisation that may have come about by reflexive focus on micro and macro aspects of melody and rhythm. The anecdotal experiences of contemporary performers and improvising musicians point to what can be described as a semi-awareness of being and non-being at the same time: the music plays *through* the player, or the player has the experience of being a conduit for the what Gadamer would call *the mode of being* of the art object. The use of *aides memoires*, metaphor, analogy, juxtaposition and other 'tools' of composition⁸ involve a certain degree of intentional focus but with continual use and practice these too become part of the unconscious possibilities of being lost in the internal play of instrumentation of the creative process. Similarly in performance, and improvisation various instruments and degrees of technology acquire similar unconscious operational status. Where there are numerous musicians interacting together in an inter-subjective performance, for instance that which occurs in a jazz ensemble, the ebb and flow between conscious and unconscious patterns of expression permits composition in real-time as participants use call and response to both imitate and stimulate the improvised lines of the others.

During this process there may be a general intention to improvise, and some 'stock' lines and motifs may be thrown up in a semi-rehearsed manner, but there may also be instances of what can be called 'pure expression' that either modify and elaborate or simply innovate the melody, harmony or rhythmic form. During these episodes it can appear as if a convergence of being both relaxed and at the same time focussed results in the delivery of a purely expressed improvised line that allows for the essence of the immanent performance to manifest. It is at this point that one can see where Gadamer's analogy of being lost in play provides explanatory power to elucidate what happens during the creative process. Thus being lost may also involve a lack of seriousness or concern for the rules of engagement, of structure or attention to detail.

Indeed, approaches in Zen philosophy and indeed axioms of contemporary culture (e.g. Nike's 'Just Do It' logo) point to the need to refrain from the thinking about the goal of achieving a destination or technique and one will duly arrive at ones artistic or creative expression within the play of time: In other words, if we are trying 'too hard' we lose the ability to see the creative meaning in what we are doing and may simply be 'going through the motions' which does not equate with Gadamer's being lost and mode of being.

That does not mean that the art forms of Zen are left to mere chance, as if one were to dip a snake in ink and let it wriggle around on a sheet of paper. The point is rather that for Zen there is no duality, no conflict between the natural element of chance and the human element of control ... it is no contradiction to say that artistic technique is discipline in spontaneity and spontaneity in discipline. (Watts 1957: 174)

However, it must be stressed that this is not at the expense of study and practice, simply that once one becomes accomplished, the technical aspects of ones art must first become internalised before they can be 'forgotten', later to be unconsciously articulated in composition, performance and improvisation.⁹

The overlap between composition, performance and improvisation

In an ongoing debate that began in 1984s, a key proponent, Phillip Alperson, asserted that the 'received' or orthodox view – in the Western cultural tradition of 'classical' music distinguishes between composition which consists of those activities that conceive and organise the parts or elements, and performance, which refers to the 'executory activity' that renders the composition into sequences of sounds.¹⁰ Alperson's main point is that it is "functionally necessary" that the composition of orchestral music must involve an element of performance that is imagined, what he calls "inward performances." Even in the case of non-traditional compositional methods that involve algorithmic formulae or randomisations it can be argued that this inward performance is still possible because the composer is reflexively familiar with their compositional tools that they can expect them to produce for example, feelings of tension, gravity and dynamic pull etc. (Alperson 1991: 371)

Where, to use Alperson's terms composition and performance are 'related temporally and causally' one can imagine that the connection between these processes can be loose or more connected depending on the type of composition or performance etc. In what we can term the traditional method, in which a composer either has ideas of melody, harmony and or rhythm, that either pertain to a mood or feeling of expression or are simply generated intuitively, the processes of composition and performance may be separate and distinct (Figure 2, 'overlapping process 1'). However, with increased temporal and causal linkage, these two processes can be imagined to have varied degrees of overlap that create an area where composing involves a degree of performance and performance involves a degree of composition (Figure 2, 'overlapping process 2').

The area of imagined overlap visible between composition and performance provides an opportunity for further elaboration about what might take place (Figure 3). Again, using Alperson's terms we can see that the overlapping area labelled 'A' could involve an 'imagine inward performance' to take place in the mind of the composer or certain 'decisions about form' etc. to take place in the mind of the performer. These processes may occur within a conscious or unconscious sense of being, including when 'lost' in the Gadamerian sense.

Figure 2. The Overlapping Process 1 + 2

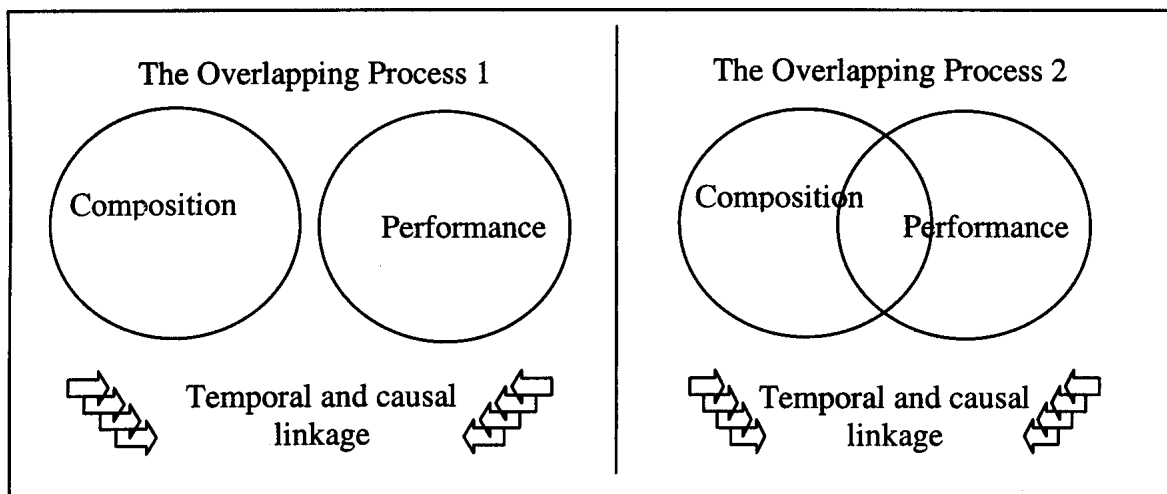
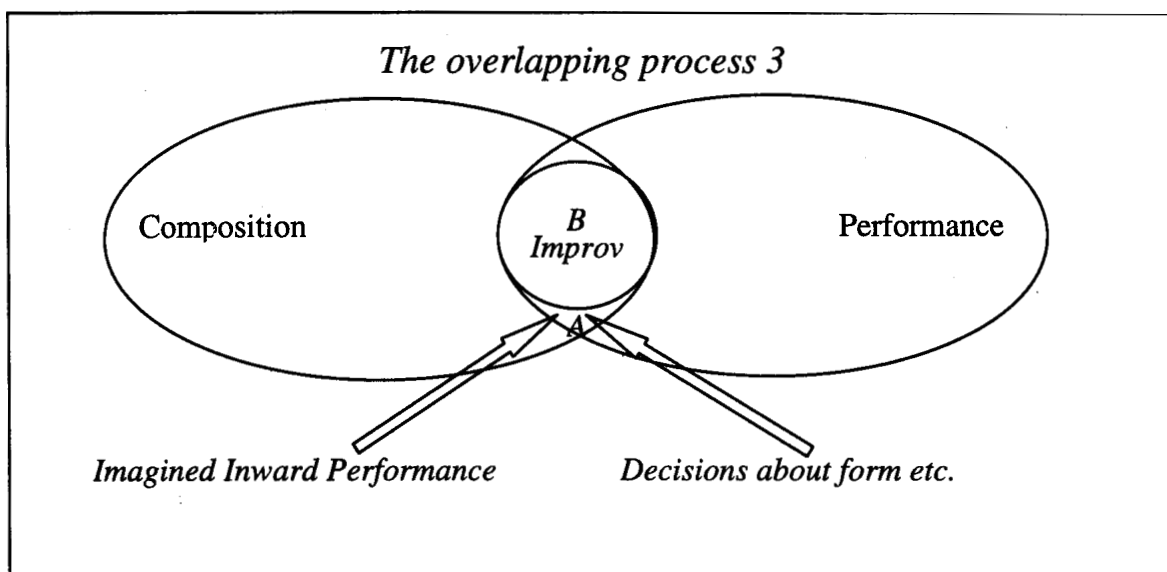


Figure 3. The Overlapping Process 3



The inner circle of overlap labelled 'B', allows us to discuss improvisation. The inner circle B can be understood in a number of ways, but this would always incorporate the described attributes from area A. Area B can be understood as a situation in which a composer works with her usual tools of composition, including the 'to and fro' mechanism of auditioning and developing various lines on an instrument and working through the transcription into notated music as she reaches the ideal motifs and expression etc. Here the composer is both improvising an imagined inner performance, but also testing out that performance herself on an instrument. Another situation occurs when seen from the perspective of the performer. Area B can be understood as a situation in which a performer not only makes decisions about style and personal expression, but also relies on her experience and understanding of musical idioms to 'become lost' and intuitively create forms of melody, harmony and rhythm based on varied real-time interpretation of either a piece of pre-composed music or a set of general rules about style, genre or song form etc.

Losing oneself in composition

As a means of reinforcing the point that composers can perform 'imaginally' (sic) Alperson refers to statements made in letters written by both Mozart and Beethoven. In the former Mozart described himself during the composition process as:

...being – completely myself, entirely alone and working over time from memory until the idea or motif is developed and the rules of counterpoint and peculiarities of various instruments then applied (Alperson 1991: 371)

Similarly Beethoven described himself as:

...being able to see the 'image [of the music] in front of him from every angle, until only the labour of writing it down remains...' (Alperson 1991: 371)

Both of these examples relate to composition as illustrated by area A in Figure 3. Beethoven's distinction between the imagining and the labour of writing his music serves to emphasise that for him perhaps writing was an ancillary task as the music had 'already been composed'. Both the above suggest that compositional activity can also be almost exclusively an internal one, separate from the 'documentation process' of writing. Though Alperson admits that the abilities of composers to engage in 'inward performances' may vary, so will the role of performance in their productive activity generally (Alperson 1991: 371). Those that find themselves in need of each can obviously make decisions to develop the necessary skills to operationalise them accordingly.

Losing oneself in performance

How close does an actual performance need to be to the notated intention of the composer? According to Wolterstorff (1980: 81), the performance of a piece is only required to "come fairly close to exemplifying the acoustic and instrumental properties normative within that work." This represents a 'proximity of recognition' that both allows for a continuum of 'identifiability' at one end and the opportunity for innovation on the part of the performer at the other. Obviously, a step too far in the latter direction could render the performance into a derivative work rather than what could be termed a 'standard' performance.

Though the 'acoustic and instrumental properties' of various styles of e.g. jazz and world music cannot readily be generalized to a set of specific elements, they can be said to exist as a recognisable set of properties that span a number of semi-structured idioms. Thus it is 'acceptable' that interpretations can even be esoteric as they may still refer at some point during the structure of a piece to the received and accepted idioms of the original. In traditional jazz improvisation the practice of playing the 'head' or melody of a piece and returning to it periodically provides an iteration of what can be called the 'exemplification process' whereby even non-enthusiasts may recognize the melody.

In performances of other genres of music, though the performance of a piece is generally the instantiation (performed existence) of it, and as usually expected this would be within the proximity of recognition as outlined above. In many ways all performance of musical works involve improvisation.

Interpretation is the players conceptual realization of the musical score in performance, and, by necessity, interpretation involves improvisation. (Gould & Keaton 2000: 143)

New iterations of musical interpretations can also be created in cases where the piece is construed to be variable, is intended to be improvised, or is simply chosen to be improvised by a performer. As Alperson (1991: 372) points out, the famous example of Cage's *4'33" of silence*, the response of the audience and the ambient sounds that exist will always vary and produce a different experience each time. Equally, the variability of the improvised performance applies to works like La Monte Young's 1960 *Composition No. 7* (an interval "to be held for a very long time") or to the performance and improvisation of jazz standards like *Caravan*¹¹ or *A Night in Tunisia*.¹²

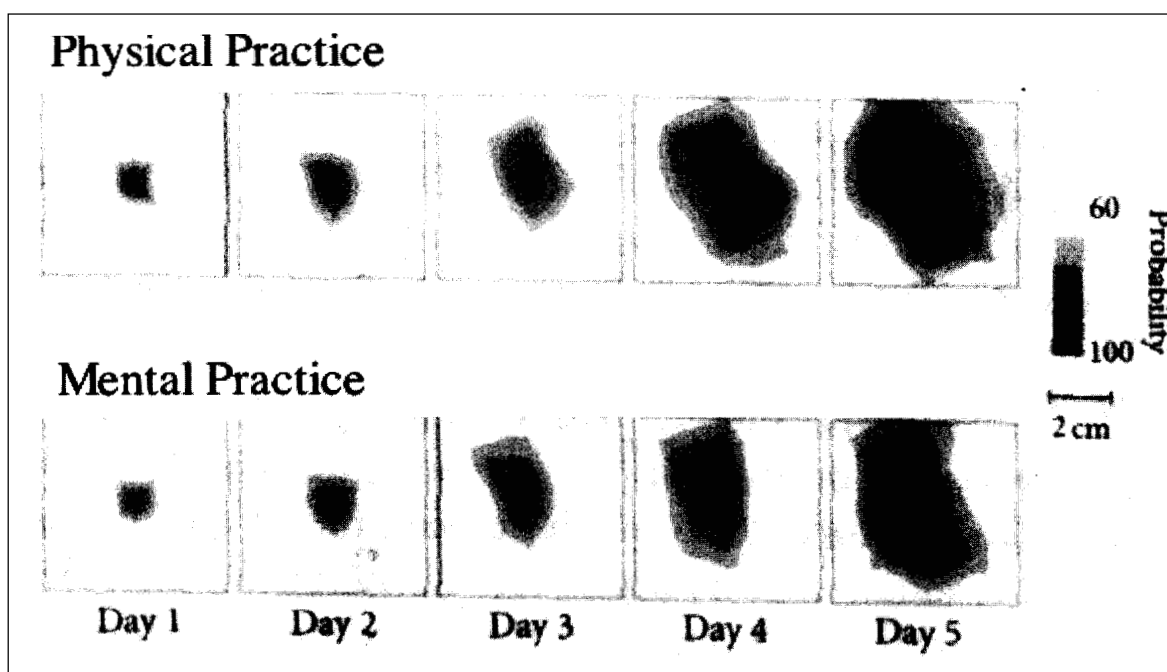
In improvisational performance, a collective creative process constitutes the creative product: an ephemeral public performance. (Sawyer 2000: 150)

Sawyer's statement also iterates the medial aspect referred to by Gadamer in relation to the mode of being of the work of art.

As for the act of imagined performance for the performer, where a performer does not actually play an instrument but only thinks about playing or improvising a work, recent research using neuro-imaging techniques not available to Alperson when he wrote his original 1984 paper seem to corroborate his position that imagining and performing a work are largely similar processes. Recent developments in brain scanning technologies can now show the brain as it acquires creative and performative motor skills and suggest that simply thinking of performing a piece of music both practices and retains the necessary performing abilities.

Pascual-Leone (2004) conducted control mediated experiments using 'transcranial magnetic stimulation' (TMS) that is, the collection of images of a number of subjects brain activity during active performances of single hand exercises for keyboard. Data collected included variations in tempo accuracy, both before and after a practice sessions and with trained and 'untrained' hands over a fixed period. Results showed an increased activity in certain 'motor areas' of the brain that was retained over time as the participants achieved what was termed 'overlearning' (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. Cortical output maps for physical vs mental practice (Pascual-Leone 2004)



This retention of skill level demonstrated "trace or memory of the activation of the motor cortical outputs that took place during the performance..." In short the brain actually changes its structure, a process that Pascual-Leone calls 'plastic reorganisation' as instrumentalists learn new pieces.

The point for this paper is that that Pascual-Leone also found that in another related experiment, simply thinking about performing (without playing) created the same imaged activity in the brain and further, after a lapse in actual performing where the level of skill would normally drop, those who had only thought about performing re-acquired the skills necessary for near perfect performance much more rapidly than those who did not think of performing and almost as quickly as those who had actually performed.

If Pascual-Leone's work is correct in showing that imagining and performing a musical work are largely similar processes, then the processes at work in composing and notating music and imagining the performance of it as discussed above would appear to be of the same type of activity.

Conclusion

This paper has presented an inclusive and critical hermeneutic approach to understanding the process of musical creativity by looking at the overlap between composition, performance and improvisation rather than treating them as academically separate processes that require different methodologies. Gadamer's concept of play and the requirement of 'becoming lost' in the interpretation and creation of one's art provides useful insights into how we can understand the creative process, whether compositional, performative or improvisational, not only in music but also in the interpretation and expression of artistic works in general.

Though the problem of the hermeneutic circle means that there will never be true objectivity in understanding, this serves to highlight that understanding is always an ongoing process and like creative endeavour itself, is always changing and evolving into new forms of appropriation interpretation and understanding. As one becomes aware of the limitations of one's perspective or prejudices in a reflexive manner, this allows the process to continue afresh. For the arts, this can be seen as a good thing as art is concerned with expressing and imitating nature through the perspective or mirror of human experience.

The contextual approach of a critical hermeneutics provides a means to consider both structuralist and hermeneutic methods in the study and interpretation of composition performance and improvisation. It can help to explain what occurs during the creative process and how we may be able to use this to understand what 'being lost in play' entails. Similarities to the explanation of the creative act in the arts in *Zen* philosophy served to ground Gadamer's insights with what appears more cogency than a general aesthetic theory, though the point here is not to suggest that this is the only interpretation possible.

Finally, it has been argued that the three pursuits of composition, performance and improvisation overlap in both a conceptual and practical manner. Simply thinking about a creative act and imagining its public presentation, performance or exhibition, permits the exercise and or development of the creative act in a virtual internal 'personal space'. Recent developments within the neurological field have demonstrated the hitherto unknown relationship between thinking and performance, and highlights the artificiality between composition, performance and improvisation. As the science and technology advances, further evidence of these interlinkages is likely to emerge. In the meantime, for the theorists and musicologists, composers and performers these approaches hopefully present additional resources with which to examine and analyse their subject material or practice their art.

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Notes

- ¹ See Fournier (2001) for a consideration of structuralist and hermeneutic approaches using the perspectives of Thomas Kuhn's and Karl Popper.
- ² See Bourdieu (1988).
- ³ However, as will be argued here, the hermeneutic process may allow us additional resources for reflection that may serve to contextualise any predisposition prejudice we may have, whether orthodox or otherwise.
- ⁴ For the distinction and an explanation of the binary opposition between 'structuralist' approaches that depend "upon pre-existing analytical methodologies designed to derive musical meaning from the examination of the musical details of a work – or, as 'hermeneutic', holding that musical meaning resides in the relationship of the musical composition to a particular historical or cultural circumstance" see Fournier (2001).
- ⁵ That is they can both provide material for an ongoing conversation.
- ⁶ This also echoes Gadamer's use of Aristotle's concept of 'practical wisdom' known as *phronesis* (Aristotle Nicomachean Ethics).
- ⁷ Paul Ricoeur's (In Thompson Ed. 1981) example of 'meaningful action considered as a text' illuminates the problem of hermeneutic method. See also Gadamer as considered in Bernstein (1983).
- ⁸ These could also include algorithmic tools, computers and other devices.
- ⁹ In the Zen study and practice of the arts (music, calligraphy, archery, flower arranging etc.) one must first study without doing for a very long period of time in order to internalise the form, function and concept of art before attempting to try to be an artist.
- ¹⁰ See Alpers (1984).
- ¹¹ Composed by Irving Mills, Duke Ellington, Juan Tizol.
- ¹² Composed by Dizzy Gillespie and Frank Paparelli.

Santrauka

Panirimas į muziką: hermeneutinio proceso muzikos komponavime suvokimas

Šiame pranešime, nagrinėjant improvizacijai būdingą ryšį tarp komponavimo ir atlikimo, pristatomas interpretavimo mechanizmo suvokimo metodas komponavimo procese.

H. G. Gadameris yra rašęs apie „pasinerimą į žaidimą“: kelias į suvokimą ir interpretaciją eina per pripažinimą; „tiksliai“ ką nors interpretuoti įmanoma tik tada, kai visiškai į tai pasineriama. Jis laikė, kad tik visiškai pasinerdami į žaidimą ir nepaisydami aplinkinių galime suvokti, ką mes galvojame apie kūrybą paties kūrybinio proceso metu. Jei, į ką nors pasinerus ir atsiribojus nuo visokių mus veikiančių įtakų ir „išankstinių nusistatymų“, mus veikia įvairūs procesai, tai tokių procesų tyrinėjimas turėtų nustatyti, jog tarp suvoktų išankstinių nusistatymų ir interpretacinio veiksmo vyksta sąmoninga dialektinė veikla.

Pranešime teigiama, kad, pagal Gadamerio teoriją, išankstinių nusistatymų gali išreikšti taip pat ir išmokti dalykai, tokie kaip, pvz., muzikos ar džiazio teorija. Kad visiškai „pasinertum į žaidimą“ ir improvizuotum, reikia (nors tai ir skamba paradoksaliai) sąmoningai pamiršti muzikines struktūras kaip „ribojantį faktorių“, ir sąmonėje leisti joms veikti improvizavimo procesą. Iš to galima daryti išvadą, kad improvizavimo metu vyksta hermeneutinis ciklas. Be to, norint pastebėti savo išankstinių nusistatymų, reikia leisti jam pasireikšti interpretavimo proceso metu, o tai reiškia, kad savo paties polinkių pažinimas veikia kaip savireguliuotojas interpretavimo veikloje, kuri kartu yra ir komponavimas, ir interpretavimas, ir atlikimas. Kuo giliau intuityviai suvokiamos mus veikiančios įtakos, tuo lengviau įmanoma interpretuoti ar suprasti savo meną.

Pranešime dar kartą apžvelgiama hermeneutinio ciklo problema, siekiama pabrėžti Gadamerio analogijos aktualumą, nagrinėjant šiuolaikinių požiūrį į kūrybišką komponavimą ir, remiantis džiazio improvizacija, kurioje susilieja tuo pat metu vykstantys komponavimo ir atlikimo procesai, įrodyti šios analogijos reikšmę suvokiant kūrybiškumą.